



Department of Justice

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FORMER LABOR DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL PLEADS GUILTY TO STEALING GOVERNMENT LAPTOP COMPUTERS

WASHINGTON, DC – A former Supervisory Program Manager for the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the U.S. Department of Labor has pleaded guilty to the theft of government laptop computers, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division announced today.

Basit Chaudhary pleaded guilty to a one-count criminal information this morning at U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia. The information, filed on Nov. 2, 2005, charged Chaudhary with felony theft of government property for stealing and converting to his own use a total of 12 laptop computers belonging to ETA. The computers were valued at approximately \$24,000.

At the time of his thefts, the defendant's official responsibilities included supervising the purchase and evaluation of computers and other information technology goods and services for ETA and ensuring that ETA's purchases and expenditures were used only for official purposes.

As part of his plea agreement, Chaudhary admitted that he stole a total of 12 laptop computers from ETA during 2003 and that he sold six of these computers to private parties. The defendant further admitted that he subsequently purchased six laptop computers using his personal credit card and had them shipped to ETA, and that he then called one of his ETA subordinates and told him that these six laptop computers were the same laptop computers that the defendant had removed from ETA previously. As part of his plea, the defendant has agreed to provide restitution to ETA for the remaining six laptops.

The case was investigated by the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Labor. The case is being handled by Nancy L. Simmons of the Public Integrity Section of the Department of Justice, headed by Section Chief Noel L. Hillman.

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